

FILMIC REGRESSION: *THE BABY* AND *BABY HUEY*

JCW *The second of two pieces Kelley wrote as introductions to film screenings in the MFA program at Art Center College of Design in the early 1990s (see also "Hollywood Filmic Language, Stuttered," above in this volume), "Filmic Regression: The Baby and Baby Huey" is a meditation on the regressive experience of film viewing read through two lurid representations of infancy, in Ted Post's The Baby (1973) and the character Baby Huey, introduced by Paramount/Famous Studios in 1951. A particularly violent Baby Huey cartoon, Starting from Hatch (dir. Seymour Kneitel, 1953), was screened. Ted Post attended the presentation and revealed that the script of The Baby, based on real-life events, was so shocking that he decided to shoot the film in a "flat," realistic manner in order to defuse its exploitative qualities. Kelley's discussion of "filmic regression" originally bore the subtitle "Cinema, Mommy's Little Helper," which points to the key suggestion Kelley offers here: that film is a replay of infantile experience. This proposition relates to his career-long, intermedia inquiry into regression, repression, and adolescence, especially visible in his work with stuffed toys and craft materials (which commenced in the later 1980s), and in more recent activity such as the investigation of memory pathologies, including Repressed Memory Syndrome, in projects such as Educational Complex (1995). A similar version of the text was published in More & Less, ed. Sylvère Lotringer (Pasadena, Calif.: Art Center College of Design, 1999), pp. 125–33.*